



**Australian Government**

**Defence**

Air Commodore Ron Tilley  
Director General  
Capital Facilities and Infrastructure  
Brindabella Business Park [REDACTED]  
PO Box 7925  
CANBERRA BC ACT 2610  
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[REDACTED]

**Mr Graham Perrett MP**

Chair

Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works

Parliament House

CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Mr Perrett

**COMMUNITY CONSULTATION REPORT  
RAAF BASE LEARMOUTH REDEVELOPMENT ENABLING KC-30A  
OPERATIONS PROJECT**

1. The RAAF Base Learmonth Redevelopment Enabling KC-30A Operations Project (the Project) was referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works on 28 November 2023. The Project proposes to deliver facilities and infrastructure at RAAF Base Learmonth near Exmouth, Western Australia.
2. This letter is to inform the Committee of the nature and extent of community consultation that has been undertaken by the Department of Defence for the proposed works. The aim of the consultation is to ensure local communities and other stakeholders are:
  - a. well informed about Project details through effective and proven communication channels; and
  - b. provided the opportunity to raise any concerns or issues, or to seek further information, so that, wherever feasible, Defence can address these within the Project.
3. The following stakeholder and community consultation activities have been delivered in accordance with the Project's comprehensive Community and Stakeholder Engagement Plan:
  - a. advertising community information sessions in relevant local newspapers in the North West and Pilbara regions – these details are included in the example advertisement shown at **Annex A**;
  - b. one community information session was held on 19 December 2023 in Exmouth, Western Australia. The type of information Defence presented to the public is shown at **Annex B**, and the level of attendance is provided at **Annex C**.
  - c. inviting key stakeholders, including the State Member of Parliament, the Shire of Exmouth, and local community and business groups, to inform them about the Project – an example of the invitation that was sent out is provided at **Annex D**.

4. A list of all stakeholders engaged by the Project, including the status of each engagement, is provided at **Annex E**.
5. Information about the proposed works was well received at the community information session and feedback to date has been supportive. Defence has not been made aware of any objections to the proposed works. A summary of topics and key issues raised during the community information sessions is provided at **Annex F**.
6. Comments raised by members of the community were mainly focused on:
  - a. the impact of the proposed works on the operation of the civilian airport that is located at RAAF Base Learmonth and associated airline flight schedules;
  - b. accommodation arrangements for the construction workforce, noting the limited supply of local housing and short-stay accommodation in the Exmouth region;
  - c. impacts from construction traffic; and
  - d. opportunities for local industry.
7. Consultation activities have concluded. Defence will provide a briefing to Federal, State and Local Members of Government contacted during the consultation process should they request one. These ongoing activities will be further advised at the upcoming Hearing.

Yours sincerely,

**RM Tilley**  
Air Commodore  
Director General Capital Facilities and Infrastructure

3 February 2024

**Annexes:**

- A. Newspaper Advertisements
- B. Examples of Community Information Session Resources (Information Boards)
- C. Community Information Session Attendance and Summary
- D. Example of Letter of Invitation to Key Stakeholders
- E. Status of Key Stakeholder Communications
- F. Summary of Topics and Key Issues Raised during Community Information Session

**NEWSPAPER ADVERTISEMENTS**

<b>Location</b>	<b>Publication</b>	<b>Dates Published</b>
North West Metropolitan	The West Australian	09 December 2023
North West Metropolitan	The West Australian	16 December 2023
Pilbara Region	Pilbara News (WA)	13 December 2023
Pilbara Region	Pilbara News (WA)	20 December 2023

**EXAMPLE OF NEWSPAPER ADVERTISEMENTS – RAAF Base Learmonth:  
Advertisements published in The West Australian and Pilbara News – Karratha**



**Australian Government**  
**Department of Defence**

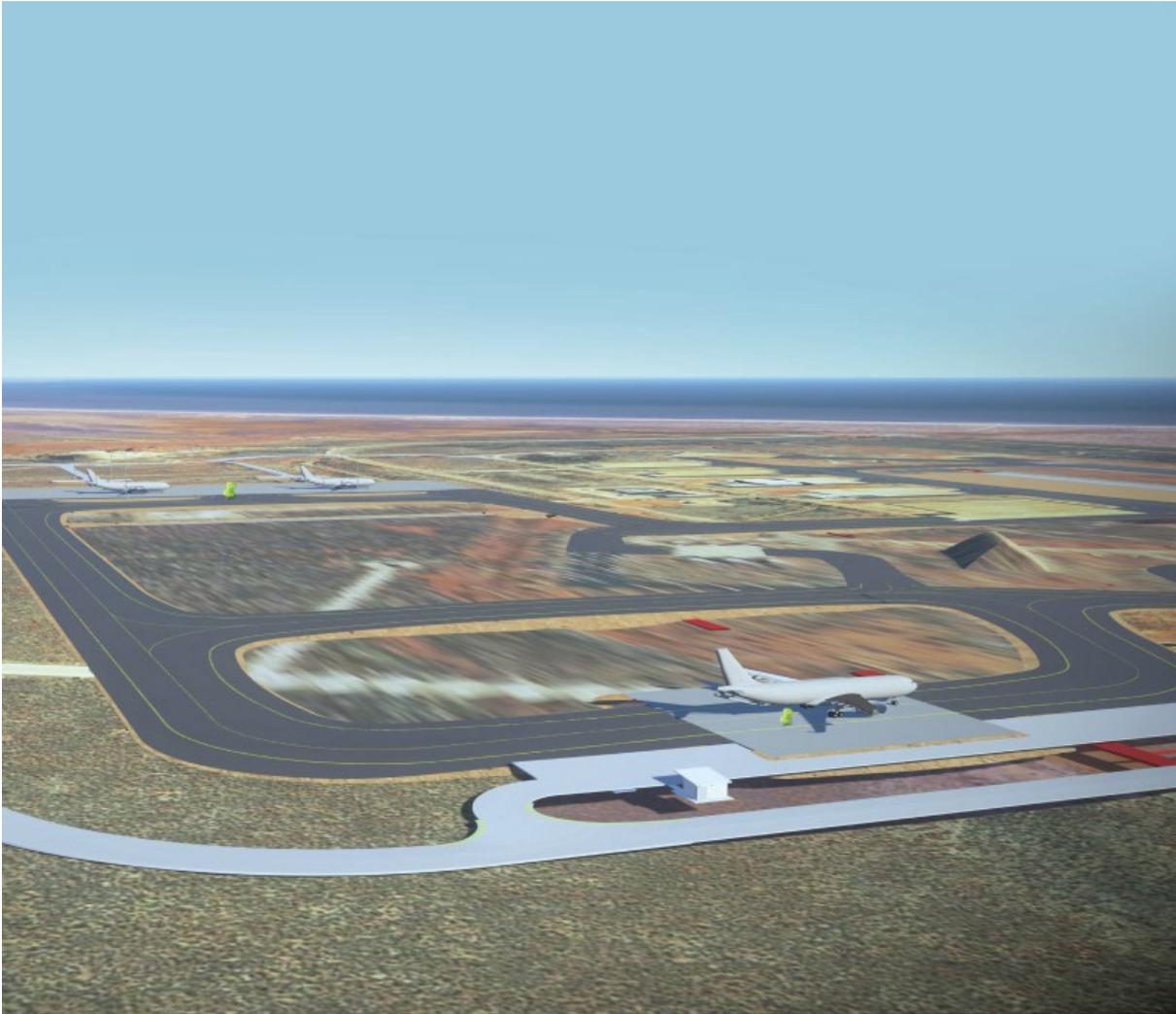
**RAAF Base Learmonth  
Redevelopment**

Please join the Department of Defence for a community consultation session regarding the RAAF Base Learmonth Redevelopment Enabling KC-30A Operations Project on **Tuesday 19 December 2023 from 3pm – 6pm** in the Mandu Mandu room of the Ningallo Function Centre.

**Details of the project can be found on the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works website:** Department of Defence – RAAF Base Learmonth Redevelopment Enabling KC-30A Operations, Exmouth, Western Australia – Parliament of Australia ([aph.gov.au](http://aph.gov.au))

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**EXAMPLES OF COMMUNITY INFORMATION SESSION RESOURCES  
(INFORMATION BOARDS)**





**COMMUNITY INFORMATION SESSION  
ATTENDANCE AND SUMMARY**

Details

- Ningaloo Function Centre (2 Truscott Cres, Exmouth, WA)
- 19 December 2023, 3:00pm to 6:00pm

Resources

- Materials on display included the information boards shown at **Annex B**
- Defence consultation team in attendance included members from:
  - Defence's Project Delivery Team
  - Consultant Project Management Team

Attendance

<b>Number of attendees</b>	<b>Interest Group</b>
3	State Government
1	CEO Chamber of Commerce
9	Local Residents
<b>Total: 13</b>	

Key points raised:

- Impact of project works on the operation of the RAAF Base Learmonth civilian airport and availability of flights.
- Accommodation arrangements for the construction workforce.
- Impact on local tourism.
- Construction material and fuel transportation to the site.
- Opportunities for local industry participation in the proposed works.

**EXAMPLE OF LETTER OF INVITATION TO KEY STAKEHOLDERS**



**Australian Government**  
**Department of Defence**  
Security and Estate Group

**OFFICIAL**

Wing Commander Danny Cusack  
Project Director National Airfields Program  
Capital Facilities and Infrastructure  
Brindabella Business Park  
PO Box 7925  
Department of Defence  
CANBERRA BC ACT 2600

[REDACTED]

**Ms Merome Beard MLA**  
Representative for North West Central  
20 Robinson Street  
Carnarvon WA 6701

Dear Ms Beard

**RAAF Base Learmonth Redevelopment Enabling KC-30A Operations**

1. Further to our conversation on 10 November, we are pleased to inform you that the *RAAF Base Learmonth Redevelopment Enabling KC-30A Operations* Project has been referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works. The documents can be found on the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works website ([Department of Defence — RAAF Base Learmonth Redevelopment Enabling KC-30A Operations, Exmouth, Western Australia – Parliament of Australia \(aph.gov.au\)](https://www.parliament.gov.au/department-of-defence-raaf-base-learmonth-redevelopment-enabling-kc-30a-operations-exmouth-western-australia-parliament-of-australia))
2. We will be conducting a community engagement session in Exmouth at the Mandu Mandu room of the Ningaloo Function Centre on Tuesday 19 December 2023, from 3pm to 6pm. We would welcome your attendance at the session.
3. If you have any questions regarding the Project, you can direct them to myself, or make a submission to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works through their website.

Yours faithfully

**DJ Cusack**  
Wing Commander  
Project Director National Airfields Program

06 December 2023

**OFFICIAL**

**STATUS OF KEY STAKEHOLDER COMMUNICATIONS**

ORGANISATION AND MEMBER	NOTES
<b>FEDERAL GOVERNMENT</b>	
<p>Hon. Melissa Price MP Federal Member for Durack</p>	<p><b>30 October 2023.</b> Defence emailed a letter to the Hon Melissa Price MP providing Project information, contact details and an invitation to contact Defence for a personal briefing.</p> <p>No Response has been received to date.</p> <p><b>6 December 2023.</b> Defence emailed a letter to the Hon Melissa Price MP, providing an update on the status of the Project and its referral to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, a site link, and inviting her to the community consultation session.</p> <p>No Response has been received to date.</p>
<b>STATE/TERRITORY GOVERNMENT</b>	
<p>Ms Merome Beard MLA North West Central</p>	<p><b>30 October 2023.</b> Defence emailed a letter to Ms Merome Beard MLA providing Project information, contact details and an invitation to contact Defence for a personal briefing.</p> <p><b>31 October 2023.</b> Ms Merome Beard MLA accepted the invitation for a personal briefing.</p> <p><b>10 November 2023.</b> Defence briefed Ms Merome Beard MLA via teleconference. She raised the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Civilian Operations.</b> Will the works have an impact on the QANTAS flights to/from Learmonth?</li> <li>• <b>Defence Response.</b> Defence recognises the importance of the civilian airport for the Exmouth region. The Project plans to first upgrade the parallel taxiway to function as a temporary runway whilst the main runway works are being undertaken. This will minimise the impact upon civilian operations.</li> <li>• <b>Workers' Accommodation.</b> Where will the construction workforce be housed, and has Defence considered the use of a proposed workers' accommodation camp in Exmouth?</li> <li>• <b>Defence Response.</b> The workforce is planned to be accommodated in temporary accommodation that will be located on the Base. This decision was based upon the limited local accommodation and the potential for disrupted access during rain events. The planned workers' accommodation camp in Exmouth was considered; however it is not likely to be completed in time to support the proposed construction timeframe, will not be large enough for the anticipated workforce and does not include a dining facility.</li> </ul>

ORGANISATION AND MEMBER	NOTES
	<p><b>6 December 2023.</b> Defence emailed a letter to Ms Merome Beard MLA, providing an update on the status of the Project and its referral to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, a site link, and inviting her to the community consultation session.</p> <p><b>7 December 2023.</b> Ms Merome Beard MLA thanked Defence for the letter but advised she would not be available for the community consultation session.</p>
<b>LOCAL GOVERNMENT</b>	
<p>Mr Ben Lewis Chief Executive Officer Shire of Exmouth</p>	<p><b>15 August 2023.</b> Defence briefed Mr Ben Lewis at the Shire offices in Exmouth. He raised the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Civilian Operations.</b> Will the works have an impact on the civilian terminal and the lease the Shire has with Defence?</li> <li>• <b>Defence Response.</b> The Project plans to upgrade the parallel taxiway to function as a temporary runway whilst the runway works are being undertaken. The airport operator will need to notify airlines of the changed landing and take-off arrangements.</li> <li>• <b>Workers' Accommodation.</b> Where will the construction workforce be housed and has Defence considered the proposed development in Exmouth to provide a longer term legacy? Mr Lewis also outlined an approved housing development in Exmouth which Defence could leverage by funding the construction of houses for use by the workforce.</li> <li>• <b>Defence Response.</b> The workforce is planned to be accommodated in temporary accommodation on the Base. This decision was made because of the limited local accommodation and potential for disrupted access during rain events. The proposed workers' accommodation in Exmouth was considered, however is not likely to be built in time to support the proposed construction timeframes. The Project was previously unaware of the approved housing development.</li> <li>• <b>Power.</b> Mr Lewis outlined the constraints of power supplies to Exmouth, and the Shire's longer-term plan for a large scale solar and battery system to meet the town's needs.</li> <li>• <b>Defence Response.</b> The Project is not planning for any increase in power supplied to the Base.</li> <li>• <b>Water.</b> Mr Lewis outlined constraints on additional water in the region and the Shire's investigation of desalination to meet the town's growing water needs. He queried whether Defence could co-fund a desalination plant in conjunction with the State Government.</li> <li>• <b>Defence Response.</b> Defence is currently undertaking a study to understand how water will be provided during</li> </ul>

ORGANISATION AND MEMBER	NOTES
	<p>construction for both the works and the temporary workers' accommodation. Desalination may be considered but could result in potential delays due to necessary environmental approvals.</p> <p><b>6 December 2023.</b> Defence emailed a letter to Mr Lewis providing an update on the status of the Project and its referral to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, a site link, and inviting him to the community consultation session. The letter also outlined the request made to the Shire's airport operator to confirm status of consultation with the airlines regarding operational changes during construction.</p> <p><b>6 December 2023.</b> Mr Lewis requested a separate meeting with Defence on 19 December 2023, which was agreed.</p> <p><b>19 December 2023.</b> Mr Lewis apologised that he would be unable to meet with the Project team due to other commitments.</p>
<p>Mr Rod Evans General Manager Regional Airport Management Services Pty Ltd (operate airport on behalf of the Shire of Exmouth)</p>	<p><b>14 August 2023.</b> Defence briefed Mr Rod Evans at the company offices near Perth Airport. Mr Evans raised the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Civilian Operations.</b> Will the works have an impact on the civilian terminal and the lease the Shire has with Defence?</li> <li>• <b>Defence Response.</b> The Project plans to upgrade the parallel taxiway to function as a temporary runway whilst the runway works are being undertaken. The airport operator will need to notify airlines of the changed landing and take-off arrangements.</li> </ul> <p><b>6 December 2023.</b> Defence emailed a letter to Mr Evans providing an update on the status of the project and its referral to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, a site link, and inviting him to the community consultation session. The letter also requested advice on the status of consultation with the airlines regarding operational changes during construction.</p>
<b>COMMUNITY AND BUSINESS GROUP</b>	
<p>Mrs Sarah Booth CEO Exmouth Chamber of Commerce and Industry</p>	<p><b>6 December 2023.</b> Defence emailed a letter to Mrs Sarah Booth, providing Project information, contact details, a site link and an invitation to contact Defence for a personal briefing.</p> <p><b>20 December 2023.</b> Defence briefed Mrs Booth at her office in Exmouth. The briefing was also attended by Ms Amanda Willmott, Principal Regional Development Officer for the Gascoyne Development Commission and Mr James Archibald from Tourism WA. The members had the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Civilian Operations.</b> Will the works have an impact on the civilian terminal and the lease the Shire has with Defence?</li> <li>• <b>Defence Response.</b> The Project plans to upgrade the parallel</li> </ul>

ORGANISATION AND MEMBER	NOTES
	<p>taxiway to function as a temporary runway whilst the runway works are being undertaken. The airport operator will need to notify airlines of changes in landing and take-off procedures. The temporary runway will support operations up to Boeing 737-8 aircraft, which is the largest aircraft currently servicing Exmouth. The aerodrome is an emergency diversion airfield for very large aircraft operated by civilian airlines flying international routes. The aerodrome will not be able to support these diversions during the works on the main runway. Airlines will be notified of this temporary change and they will need to undertake risk assessments and if required amend emergency procedures.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Civilian Flights.</b> Has Defence made representations to QANTAS regarding the Project and outlined the need for additional flights to Exmouth?</li> <li>• <b>Defence Response.</b> Defence’s contractor (CPB Pty Ltd) is seeking to engage QANTAS for more flights and the use of larger aircraft to support their Fly-In Fly-Out workforce. Defence has not separately sought to influence operational decisions by QANTAS.</li> <li>• <b>Workers’ Accommodation.</b> Where will the construction workforce be housed and has Defence considered the proposed workers’ accommodation in Exmouth?</li> <li>• <b>Defence Response.</b> The workforce is planned to be accommodated in temporary accommodation that will be constructed on the Base. This decision was based upon the limited local accommodation and the potential for disrupted access during rain events. The planned workers’ accommodation camp was considered, however it is not likely to be built in time to support the proposed construction timeframes, will not be large enough for the anticipated workforce and does not include a dining facility.</li> <li>• <b>Local Employment Opportunities.</b> How will Defence ensure local businesses are engaged during the project?</li> <li>• <b>Defence Response.</b> Defence has standard contractual clauses that require Contractors to achieve a nominated percentage of the contract value to be expended in the local community. Defence’s contractor (CPB Pty Ltd) is a member of the Exmouth Chamber of Commerce and Industry and is working with the Chamber’s CEO to ensure local businesses are engaged in construction. Defence maintains a corporate scorecard of compliance against nominated local spending targets and CPB’s performance will be considered in future procurements.</li> <li>• <b>Training Opportunities.</b> How will Defence support local training and upskilling during the Project?</li> <li>• <b>Defence Response.</b> CPB has undertaken to maximise</li> </ul>

**Annex E**

<b>ORGANISATION AND MEMBER</b>	<b>NOTES</b>
	<p>training opportunities through engagement with local TAFEs and businesses. This undertaking will be contractually enforceable if CPB is engaged to undertake construction.</p>
<p>Nganhurra Thanardi Garrbu Aboriginal Corporation</p>	<p><b>16 August 2023.</b> Defence briefed the Nganhurra Thanardi Garrbu Aboriginal Corporation (NTGAC) Board on the Project. The Board was appreciative of the brief and directed their legal representatives to engage with Defence to establish an agreement for the Project. The NTGAC Legal Advisor outlined their inability to achieve this due to the changes occurring with respect to WA Legislation.</p> <p><b>25 October 2023.</b> Defence gave the NTGAC Board a tour of the Base focusing on the development areas. The Board indicated no concerns with the proposal, however they sought further engagement to ensure any heritage values in the ‘greenfield’ areas were considered. NTGAC Legal Advisors outlined their preference for a single agreement with Defence covering multiple projects.</p> <p><b>6 December 2023.</b> Defence emailed a letter to the NTGAC Board, providing project information, contact details, a site link and an invitation to attend the community consultation session.</p> <p><b>11 December 2023.</b> Ms Lisa Shiosaki, Project Coordinator – Governance formally acknowledged receipt of the letter.</p>
<p>Mr C. Mazza (QANTAS Infrastructure) Mr G. Hillman (QANTAS Operations)</p>	<p><b>7 March 2023.</b> A meeting was held with QANTAS to discuss proposed works and the intent to upgrade parallel Taxiway A for use as an alternate runway for airline passenger services to Exmouth (including occasional Boeing 737 aircraft). Defence also provided QANTAS with detailed technical information to support the discussions. QANTAS indicated they did not have concerns about the proposal to divert airline traffic from the main runway onto the upgraded taxiway for the required duration of the works, subject to appropriate notifications, signage and marking, and the development of revised approaches.</p>
<p>Royal Flying Doctor Service</p>	<p><b>19 October 2023.</b> An email was sent to the Royal Flying Doctor Service providing technical information regarding the proposed airfield works and the use of Taxiway A as an emergency runway.</p> <p>No response has been received to date.</p>

**SUMMARY OF TOPICS AND KEY ISSUES  
RAISED AT COMMUNITY INFORMATION SESSION**

<b>TOPIC</b>	<b>RAISED BY</b>	<b>DEFENCE RESPONSE</b>
<p><b>Workers' Accommodation</b></p> <p>Where is the construction workforce planned to be accommodated?</p> <p>Will Defence consider building permanent workers' accommodation in Exmouth to contribute to the local economy?</p>	CEO Chamber of Commerce	<p>The Project's workforce will be accommodated at a temporary workers' camp to be located on the Base.</p> <p>An accommodation study undertaken for the Project has identified that local accommodation at Exmouth is not a viable option. The use of a temporary camp on the Base will minimise potential adverse impacts on the Exmouth tourism sector and the local community, given the limited availability of short stay accommodation in Exmouth.</p>
<p><b>Stakeholder Engagement</b></p> <p>How was the stakeholder consultation conducted for the Project?</p>	State Government	Defence has developed a communication strategy for the Project that recognises the importance of providing Project stakeholders and local residents with an opportunity to provide input into the proposed works. Defence has, and will continue to engage with all stakeholders during the further development and delivery of the Project.
<p><b>Civilian Operations</b></p> <p>How will airfield operations be affected during construction?</p>	State Government	The works will be staged to minimise disruption to airfield operations. The Project plans to upgrade Taxiway A to be a suitable alternative runway for Boeing 737 aircraft before works commence on the main runway.
<p><b>Civilian Operations</b></p> <p>How will the works impact the availability of flights?</p>	State Government	Defence has held preliminary discussions with the Shire, the airport operator and QANTAS, and does not anticipate the works will disrupt scheduled flights and services.
<p><b>Workforce Flights</b></p> <p>Will the construction workforce use the RAAF Base Learmonth civilian airport or will there be alternative arrangements?</p>	State Government	The construction workforce will use the RAAF Base Learmonth civilian airport for their Fly-In Fly-Out workforce.
<p><b>Runway Extension</b></p> <p>Will there be an extension to the runway?</p>	Local Resident	The Project is not proposing to deliver an extension to the runway.

**Annex F**

<b>TOPIC</b>	<b>RAISED BY</b>	<b>DEFENCE RESPONSE</b>
<p><b>Local Industry Participation</b></p> <p>Will there be opportunities for local industry participation in the proposed works?</p>	Local Resident	Defence will promote opportunities for small and medium local enterprises through construction trade packages that will provide employment opportunities in the Exmouth region. The contractor has confirmed its commitment to maximising opportunities for local industry participation to deliver regional economic benefits. The contractor will also be obliged to meet targets for local industry participation as set out in the contract.
<p><b>Materials Delivery</b></p> <p>How will construction materials and fuel will be delivered to site?</p>	Local Resident	Construction supplies and fuel will be transported by road from either Perth or northern ports. Construction material will come from a variety of quarries in the wider Exmouth region. The contractor is currently undertaking a traffic study to understand the impacts of this construction traffic.
<p><b>Construction Traffic</b></p> <p>How will the Project manage issues such as road use and construction traffic?</p>	State Government	To reduce the impacts of construction traffic and to improve safety, Defence will construct intersection improvements on the main road to Exmouth. The proposed improvements include widening of the main road to provide dedicated slip and turning lanes at the northern entrance to the Base.
<p><b>Power and Water</b></p> <p>Where will the Project get the water and power from?</p>	State Government	Defence is currently undertaking studies to confirm the water and power requirements and their availability for the construction works. The initial studies indicate that the Project will use the Base's existing bore water and power supplies.
<p><b>Workforce Size</b></p> <p>What size of workforce is expected to be involved in the construction of the Project?</p>	Local Resident	The Project is anticipating a peak workforce of approximately 300 people.
<p><b>Construction Timeline</b></p> <p>When is the construction expected to commence?</p>	Local Resident	Subject to Parliamentary approval, construction is expected to commence in mid-2024 and be completed by the end of 2028.